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The 16-count indictment of Rep. William Jefferson (D-La.) has renewed the push among lawmakers in both chambers for a pension bill that would revoke the federal paycheck for lawmakers convicted of a felony.

Sen. Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.) will push for a provision originally introduced by Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) to strip lawmakers convicted of a felony of their congressional pension during the ethics bill conference committee, according to a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee spokeswoman.

If that effort falters, House GOP lawmakers say they will attempt to attach pension revocation language to an appropriations measure through a motion to recommit. The House passed legislation on this issue in January, but it has stalled in the Senate.

If convicted, Jefferson would still be eligible for an annual pension of more than \$40,000 if he resigned now, or up to \$50,000 if he served out his term, according to the National Taxpayers Union (NTU).

Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) blamed the Senate for failing to pass the pension provisions during the last Congress and this one.

“In two years the American taxpayers will have paid Jefferson more than he had in his freezer.”

At least 20 former members of Congress convicted of felonies in the past 30 years receive or stand to collect taxpayer-funded retirement checks, according to the NTU.

Former Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.), who was sent to prison in 1996, receives an annual pension of \$125,000.

Ex-Rep. Randy “Duke” Cunningham (R-Calif.) will receive \$64,000 annually, former Rep. James Traficant (D-Ohio) \$40,000, and Bob Ney (R-Ohio), \$29,000 upon their releases from prison.

These lawmakers will continue to receive their pension checks even if Congress passes the pending bills.

Steve Ellis, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, said, “After reading a nearly 100-page indictment, the last thing that taxpayers want to contemplate is sending a fat pension check to Rep. Jefferson’s cell for the rest of his days.”

Jefferson has denied any wrongdoing.